

Record

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

Barna urges more biblical worldview

By Tony Martin
Associate Editor

Best-selling author and lecturer George Barna urged Christians to adopt a more biblical worldview during his 2003 religious trends seminar presented October 23 at Ridgecrest Church, Madison.

Barna, founder of the Barna Research Group, Ltd., a marketing research firm located in Ventura, Cal., specializes in conducting primary research for Christian ministries and non-profit organizations.

His 2003 seminar, entitled Leading Your Church Forward, consisted of four sessions:

- Intentional Development of a Biblical Worldview.
- Transforming Children Into Spiritual Champions.
- Emerging Trends Affecting Your Ministry.
- Deft Handling of Common Leadership Challenges.

Using a simple lecture style illustrated with a PowerPoint presentation and detailed workbook, Barna offered the 300 conferees at Ridgecrest Church a detailed description of what he perceives to be the future of the Christian church in America.

During the first session, Intentional Development of a Biblical Worldview, Barna asked, "Why isn't the church acting like the church Jesus Christ died for?" He defined worldview as "a mental and spiritual lens through which you interpret reality, and a filter you use to put things into context and facilitate an appropriate response."

Barna's contention is that the church needs a biblical worldview, one that

helps Christians think like Jesus. "A lot of people buy a Bible, pray a couple of times a week, go to church and think they're 'there,'" Barna said. "What a strategy of Satan — to get the opposing army to adopt a worldview that has nothing to do with God."

Barna's research shows only nine percent of born-again adults have a biblical worldview. Another six percent have the foundation — a belief that there is absolute moral truth and that the Bible is the source of truth. That means 85% of all born again adults have neither the foundation nor the theological perspective required for a biblical worldview, he pointed out.

The second session, Transforming Children into Spiritual Champions, tapped Barna's belief that effective ministry to children is one of the most important factors in healthy churches.

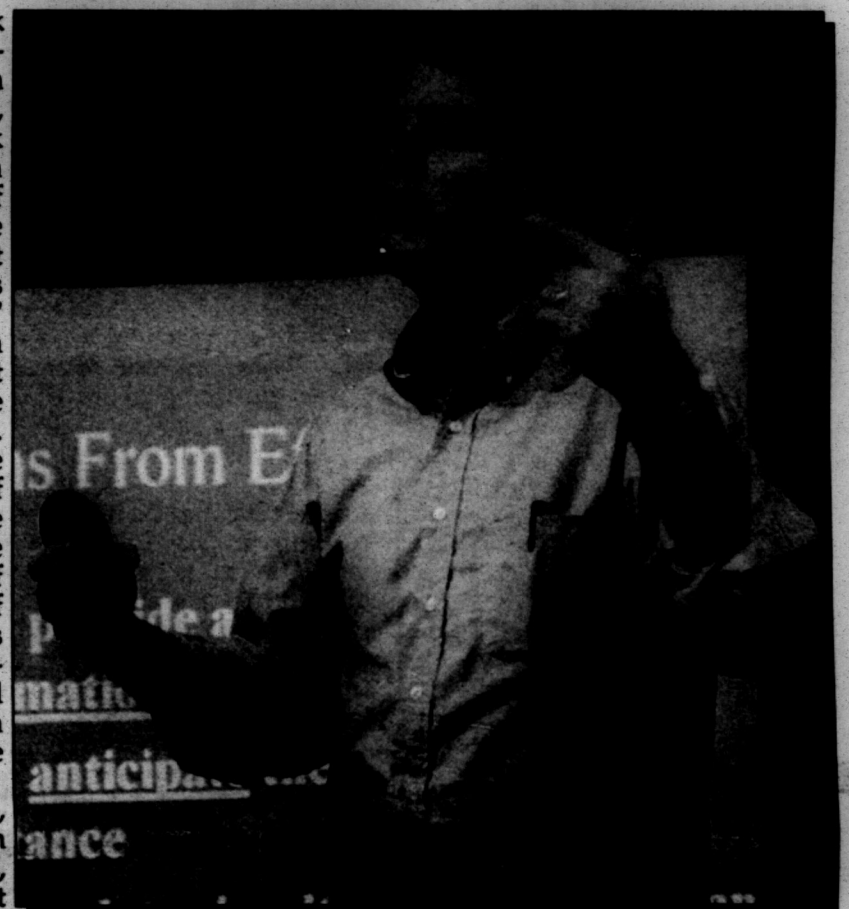
"Most parents have become totally dependent upon the church's health in the spiritual development of their kids," Barna said. Most parents say they are struggling with the moral and spiritual development of their children, he added.

"Should churches throw in the towel in children's ministry?" Barna asked. "When public schools, TV, movies, and pop music do a fabulous job of Bible-based spiritual development, then you can give it up. God never sets you up for failure."

In his third session, Emerging Trends Affecting Your ministry, Barna noted several signs of "subterranean turbulence" affecting the church. These included baby busters trending toward more traditional forms of worship while accepting less traditional lifestyles; the increasing dropout rate among senior adults; how faith is being redefined in the African-American community; and how the South is dying as a Christian stronghold.

Barna said research shows the percentage of unchurched adults has risen substantially in the last decade, from 24% to 33%. Barna stated the percentage of regular church-goers who are not born again has remained unchanged, at about 43%.

One item noted by Barna was the exaggeration of the importance of "worship wars" — the use of music in worship. Barna said his research shows that only one out of six people in the pew care about the style of music, and that laity want songs with greater depth; more time for prayer, even traditional prayers and creeds; and a time of confession during the service.



POINTS TO PONDER — California religious trends researcher George Barna shares insights into the future of the Christian church in America during his 2003 seminar entitled, Leading your Church Forward, on October 23 at host Ridgecrest Church, Madison. The event was co-sponsored by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board. (BR photo by Tony Martin)

Barna said pastors, conversely, wanted more time for preaching; more time for music; and more time for Bible reading. Barna believes that finding betrays a significant disconnect between the pulpit and pew.

The final session, Deft Handling of Common Leadership Challenges, covered such topics as the struggle to maintain God-honoring character; communicating God's vision in ways that make it inescapable; and objectively assessing your impact in your current setting and knowing if you're still in the right place.

Barna stated that a Christian leader must be called by God, exhibit godly character, and possess a viable mix of leadership competencies.

"Christian leaders are rarely removed from leadership for lack of competence," Barna said. He contends leaders are challenged to create "surround-vision," a vision that surrounds and permeates the ministry.

Four out of five pastors think they do a good job communicating God's vision for the ministry, he observed, while more than two out of three of the congregants wish the pastor would do a better job of communicating vision.

The Barna seminar was co-sponsored by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, and supported by gifts to the Mississippi Cooperative Program. Ridgecrest Church served as the host church.

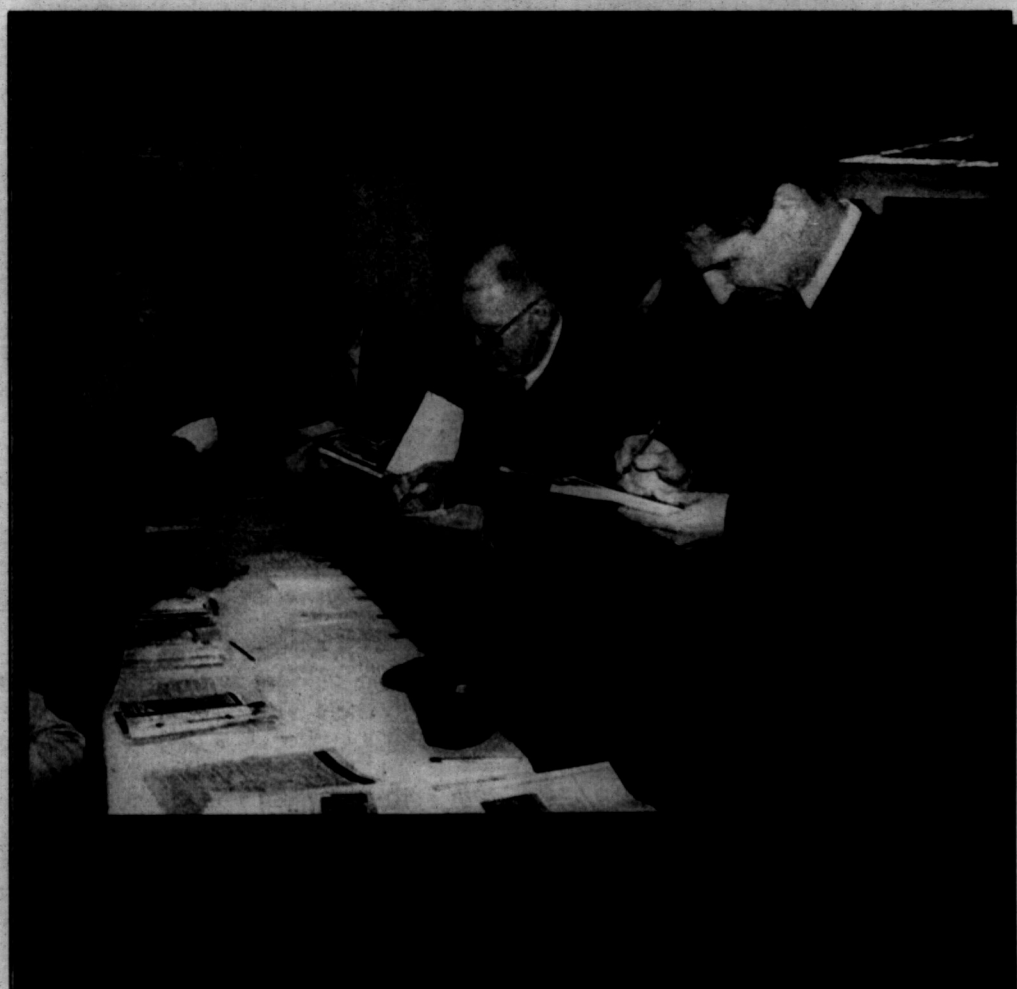
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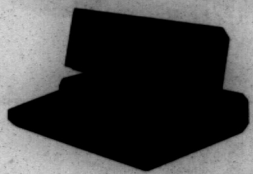
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Fighting for life in Florida

Terri Schiavo and her family had a good day last week, visiting together for the first time in a long while. It had been a long while since they had seen each other because Terri's family had been barred from her hospital bedside, after a Florida judge agreed with the comatose woman's husband that she should be starved to death.

It's really that simple. Michael Schiavo is attempting to euthanize his wife, who was severely brain damaged in 1990 when her heart stopped beating for about 10 minutes. He says she will never recover. Her family wants her to at least have an opportunity for rehabilitation, whether or not the effort is ultimately successful. Florida law, as interpreted by the judge, gives Michael as next-of-kin the right to make the decision.

Michael ordered the removal of Terri's feeding tube, which meant she would have starved to death — or more likely died from dehydration — in a matter of days. Either way, it would have been a painful, lingering death for Terri. Can any of us imagine ordering the starvation of another person? Can any of us imagine starving a dog to death? Yet that's what Michael wants to do to Terri, apparently even lacking the courage to go to the hospital and do it himself.

Florida Governor Jeb Bush and the state lawmakers intervened last week, approving legislation that allowed the governor to get involved. He promptly ordered the reinsertion of the feeding tube. Some medical observers believe that after six days with no food or water, Terri was within hours of kidney shutdown from the effects of dehydration.

Michael has his reasons for wanting to fight this latest turn of events. In the 13 years since his wife became comatose, he has received large legal awards of over one million dollars and allegedly fathered a child by another woman with whom he has an ongoing relationship. Terri is an impediment to the kind of life he wants to live, so she has to go. Terri's parents, the governor of Florida, and a majority of that state's legislature disagree. Michael has vowed through his attorney to

continue the fight until Terri is dead.

What kind of man (term used loosely in this case) would commit adultery and even father a child while his wife lies in a coma, and then attempt to starve her to death? What kind of woman would willingly engage in this type of relationship with a married man that results in pregnancy, taking advantage of a woman who could not speak up in her own defense? What kind of judge could look at the circumstances of this case and rule in favor of the scheming husband and his girlfriend? It sounds like the plot of a bad television movie, but it's true.

Such is the state of American society today. It's not enough that millions of unborn babies have been slaughtered in the name of sexual license, self-gratification, and convenience — now gravely ill people must be moved out of the way if they prevent us from living our lives as we please. Nothing short of death will do for these people, even if they have to be agonizingly dehydrated into kidney failure.

How much longer will it be before we condone the euthanizing of seriously but not terminally ill people? How much longer will it be before chronically ill people are involuntarily killed? We are well down the slippery slope predicted by ethicists at the time of *Roe v. Wade*, the U.S. Supreme Court case that legalized abortion nationwide through all nine months of pregnancy and childbirth.

In some states in this country, assisted suicide is legally permitted. Peter Singer, of all things a bioethics professor at Princeton University, has put forth the idea that parents should be empowered to exterminate their child within 30 days of its birth if they so choose. In some European countries, medical and govern-



MOTHER AND DAUGHTER — Terri Schiavo (right) looks toward her mother, Mary Schindler, in a photo from www.terri-schiavo.org, a website which chronicles the 39-year-old Schiavo's life — now dependent on her parents' battle to provide for her care in the face of efforts by her husband to have a life-sustaining feeding tube removed from Terri, who became brain-damaged in 1990.

ment personnel decide on their own when a person has become too great a burden on the system and must be put to death.

The Creator of all life will be not pleased if Christians stand by and let such tragedies occur. Christians who are acting decisively, like Governor Jeb Bush and key Florida legislators, are coming under withering attack in the liberal news media. Members of the culture of death in this country will not give up this fight, because they realize what is at stake. Do Christians likewise realize what is at stake?

We must pray for these bold leaders and support their struggle to do the right thing, and we must be vigilant to ensure nothing like this happens on our watch in Mississippi. If it does happen here, we must be prepared to join the battle on the side of the powerless who cannot speak for themselves.

All of us were once powerless and condemned to death, and Someone spoke up for us. Saved from eternal damnation and given new life, it's now our responsibility to speak up. May we be found faithful.

GUEST OPINION:



A jewel for the King

By Buddy McElroy
Assoc. Pastor for Worship and Music
Briarwood Church, Meridian

I guess because I have been a worship leader for almost 50 years and because I teach bivocational music leaders attending New Orleans Seminary extension classes in Mississippi, pastors and others call and ask me questions about what's going on in Baptist worship these days.

One pastor told me, "Our music director comes in late every Sunday just minutes before the worship time, sits on the front pew, and picks out a few traditional hymns." A layperson told me that their music director would bring his guitar to worship and use all contemporary Christian music; he doesn't even use the hymnal any more.

It's true that our worship music is going through change, that there seems to be a "battle for styles" of worship today. However, we are missing something vital to worship, and it's more valuable than customs and styles of music.

All Christians should be on a journey to worship God because He is worthy. Worship is like presenting God with a most

beautiful jewel — not that He needs or desires any jewelry, but the jewel is our praise of Him. We need to give our worship because He delights in our praise. When we come to the throne room of the King's palace and present this previous jewel of our praise, we see the King's pleasure written all over Him.

Now it would seem that if the children of God knew they could bring so much pleasure to their Father, they would do it. If they knew that just by bringing the jewel of praise that it would delight almighty God, they would easily do it. However, it's not so easily done because worship is not an activity.

Earthly kings would love that sort of activity because they could never know the heart. Because God look straight into the heart of the worshipper, true worship becomes an activity of the heart. Out of the heart comes a compelling desire to complete the journey and stand before His majesty with the pure, undefiled jewel intact. To illustrate this concept, I wrote a short drama for our church:

There were three players. One was the main person entrusted with the most beautiful jewel on a journey to present it to His King. On his journey he sees these other two people from time to time, who

tell him how it should be done. It is evident that these other two people are contrasting angels, not from their appearance but from their instructions. One is God's angel and the other belongs to Satan.

From one angel he is told not to show off his gift for others to admire but to save his gift of praise for the King only. The other angel tells him that it's okay to show off his gift for other's pleasure. "You can still bring it to the King; just prolong the journey so that others can marvel and enjoy it," he said.

The journeyman takes the advice of the latter angel. He begins to enjoy the popularity he is generating for himself with the gift, and decides to settle down and postpone his mission altogether.

There are many gifted worship leaders with gifted people in their who could impress a lot of people in worship services, and grab a lot of the attention for themselves. The challenge is to keep the jewel of worship pure and true so that at the end of the journey, we can see the pleasure of our King when He accepts it for Himself and Himself alone.

Baptists prep Jordanians at 'oasis' school

AMMAN, Jordan (BP) — It is an oasis in the Middle East — a haven for Muslims and Christians, Arabs and Anglos, boys and girls. It is the Amman Baptist School of Amman, dedicated in 1974 high atop one of the seven hills in the Al Rabia area of the kingdom's capital. An educational powerhouse in a small cluster of buildings inside a high white wall, it now houses more than a thousand students.

At the helm of the school is Florida-born Brian Barlow, a Southern Baptist missionary from Pensacola, Fla., who left a prosperous banking career in 1989 to answer a call to missions. "God spoke clearly to me and told me that He had enough bankers, but not enough missionaries," Barlow told the Florida Baptist Witness in an interview.

In 1990, with degrees in history and finance from Samford University in Birmingham, Ala., Barlow left Florida where he was a deacon at First Church Indian Rocks in Largo, for Liberia, West Africa, to serve as the mission treasurer. By 1994 Barlow and his wife, Vicki, had expanded their family to include John, born in 1991, and Anna Beth, born in 1993, with Sarah on the way.

Due to unrest in the part of the world where they served, however, they had been constantly on the move. "At the end of our first four-year term, we have worked in four different countries, moved 18 times [and] lost everything we owned — which made it easier to move," Barlow said. During their first furlough as missionaries, they went to New



EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE — Buoyed by a curriculum among the best offered in the Jordanian kingdom, graduating seniors at the Amman Baptist School look ahead to college. (BP photo by Joni B. Hannigan)

Orleans Seminary where Barlow earned a master's degree in Christian education and a doctorate in education in 1997.

It's been a steady pace for the Barlows since then. Named the academic director of the Baptist school in 1997, Barlow has since become its general director, serving in a capacity comparable to a school district superintendent in the United States. He and Vicki and one other American, Barbara Johnson, who serves as the school's music education director, are the only Southern Baptist missionaries assigned to the otherwise self-supporting school.

A vision for the school took hold in the 1960s when Baptists providing medical services in north Jordan felt the kingdom's government would welcome an additional avenue of ministry.

Working with then-Jordanian Minister of Education Zoukan Hindawi, Southern Baptist missionaries Paul and Virginia Smith began to look for land for the school in 1966.

In the nature of many countries where time often seems to stand still, however, the school did not open its doors until 1974. In its first year, the late King Hussein and Queen Noor brought their children to the school along with King Hussein's brother Prince Hassan and

his sister Princess Basma.

"It was a daring act of leadership, courage, and vision on the part of the royal family to educate their children in an evangelical Christian school," Barlow said. "Leading by example, the royal family made it socially acceptable for boys and girls, Christians and Muslims, to be educated together in hopes of fostering better relationships between all the peoples of Jordan."

"Since that time, the Baptist School has been entrusted with educating the sons and daughters of some of Amman's finest families," Barlow said.

The school accepts students as young as 40 days old and educates students through the 12th grade. Preschool is completely bilingual in Arabic and English and grades one through eight are taught primarily in Arabic although there are classes in English. French language study begins in the fourth grade. The student uniform is green pants and green and white striped shirts. Most students are computer-savvy, thanks to the school's hookup to high-speed Internet and tech-friendly classrooms and labs.

Barlow said the school's curriculum is aligned with the national Jordanian curriculum, but it also offers the only comprehensive high school in the kingdom with three different

programs in Arabic — in the sciences, arts and management information systems. An all-English language curriculum sponsored by the University of Cambridge in the United Kingdom recently was developed along with a vocational program in hotel management.

The school also has the largest and "best" music program in the kingdom, Barlow said, and offers band, guitar, piano, handbell and choral instruction. The relatively new music wing is home to several instrument practice rooms and a spacious band room.

Consequently, a typical graduate of the school can expect to be tri-literate, and currently 100 percent of its recent graduates attend a college or university in Jordan, England, Italy, Lebanon,

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Division predicted

LONDON (BP) — Anglican leaders at an emergency meeting in Canterbury issued a statement Oct. 16 that distances the worldwide body from a controversial action by the Episcopal Church (USA) and warns of an even further divide if an openly homosexual bishop is consecrated. In days leading up to the meeting between the world's primates and Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams — the Anglican spiritual leader — it was thought that conservatives might have enough votes to remove the Episcopal Church from the Anglican Communion. But that did not materialize, and instead a statement was issued. The two-day meeting was called after the Episcopal Church (USA) confirmed its first openly homosexual bishop, Gene Robinson, in August. The Anglican statement, passed unanimously by the 37 primates, criticizes both the decision by the Episcopal Church and the one by the Diocese of New Westminster in Canada allowing blessings of same-sex couples. It warns against Robinson's consecration, scheduled for Nov. 2. Robinson has said he will not back down. "If [Robinson's] consecration proceeds, we recognise that we have reached a crucial and critical point in the life of the Anglican Communion and we have had to conclude that the future of the Communion itself will be put in jeopardy," the statement reads. "In this case, the ministry of this one bishop will not be recognised by most of the Anglican world, and many provinces are likely to consider themselves to be out of Communion with the Episcopal Church (USA). This will tear the fabric of our Communion at its deepest level, and may lead to further division on this and further issues as provinces have to decide in consequence whether they can remain in communion with provinces that choose not to break communion with the Episcopal Church (USA)." Similar actions apply to the situation in Canada, the statement said. The statement calls homosexuality a "chosen lifestyle." The entire statement can be read on the Internet at: <http://www.anglican-communication.org/acns/articles/36/25/acns3633.html>.

Looking back

10 years ago

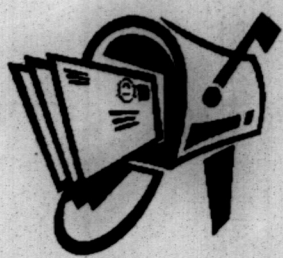
Missionary Dennis McCall of Vicksburg and his family are reunited after a harrowing week apart following the Oct. 21 military coup in the African nation of Burundi, where they serve as missionary evangelists.

20 years ago

Louisiana's Supreme Court upholds the legislature's right to order the teaching of creation-science when evolution-science is taught in the state's public elementary and secondary schools.

50 years ago

A letter to A. L. Goodrich, editor of The Baptist Record, from C. R. Maples, pastor of Wayside Church, Vicksburg, states: "I believe that our State Baptist Convention should have a rule that 'preachers receiving pastoral aid pledge themselves not to use tobacco in any form' ...why use God's money in such a sinful practice?"



LETTER TO THE EDITOR

ANNIVERSARY SET

Editor:

Quincy T. Curtis, interim pastor, Brad Day, minister of praise and worship, and Mark Williams, student minister along with the rest of the Agricola Church family cordially invite you to join us in our celebration of 100 years of serving God together and worshipping Him on Sunday, the ninth day of November, at 7268 Barton Agricola Road, Lucedale. Bryce Evans, Don Boone and Eddie Davidson will be our guest speakers. The celebration begins at 9:30 a.m. with a noon meal and ending with a 3 p.m. afternoon worship service.

It was the year 1896 when a group of dedicated Christians dreamed of and visualized the organization of what was to become Agricola Church. In the beginning it was known as New Hope Church and was a member of the Leaf River Association. During this time, the congregation met in homes. Late in the 19th century, a small wood-framed building was constructed and was located near the present New Hope Church.

They considered 1903 as the year the church truly became established and realized its potential and mission as a church, with an increase of membership to 49 people and a new building.

The heritage that has been left by those first few who prayed for God to give them a vision of what He wanted established in this small community is now being celebrated. If you need more information we can be contacted at (601) 947-2460. Centennial Committee Agricola Church, Lucedale

Miss. Baptists train Ukrainian SS leaders

By Drewe Llyn Jeffcoat
Correspondent

What began as a vision in the heart of Ukrainian Baptist Union leaders in Odessa has recently been brought to reality, thanks to Mississippi Baptists.

"In the Odessa region," says Bronislav Zilkovsky, senior pastor of Odessa's Baptist Union, "we have a lot of churches which have no Sunday school for children, and members who would want to do this kind of ministry are not equipped to do it. We wanted to teach our young people how to carry on this ministry in their churches."

Though Bronislav and other leaders envisioned a conference to train future Sunday school teachers, their resources were limited. They decided to seek help from their partnership with the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB) by calling the board's missions mobilization director, Ken Rhodes. Soon things began to happen.

Rhodes contacted Linda Reeves, children's consultant in the MBCB Sunday School Department who organized a team of teachers willing to share their expertise overseas. Lesson materials and outlines were sent to Odessa in advance so that handouts could be translated into Russian and interpreters would be well prepared. Plans were made to hold the conference at the Baptist Seminary in Odessa, and money from the MBCB missions mobilization budget enabled participants to attend free of charge.

The vision came to life on August 11-16. Beginning with a time of worship and get-acquainted activities and concluding with a Friday night banquet and presentation of certificates, eighty-one women and four men received training at the Children's Sunday School Leader Conference.

"Many (of the attendees) were seventeen, eighteen, or nineteen years of age. They weren't shy. They responded to all the projects we had for them. They were very receptive, creative, and enthusiastic," Reeves said.

Participants were divided into four groups, rotating each morning to a different four-hour class. Reeves taught a session entitled Foundations of Teaching Children. Beth Bryant, children's minister at Crossgates Church, Brandon, taught a session entitled Teaching Methods. Delayne Morris, preschool director of Carriage Hills



WATCH CLOSELY — Delayne Morris (fourth from right), preschool director at Carriage Hills Church in Southaven, demonstrates the how to use silly songs to reach out to Ukrainian children. Morris was one of several Mississippi teachers who traveled to Ukraine to help teach Sunday School leaders in that country. Mississippi Baptists have a longstanding partnership with Ukrainian Baptists. (BR photo)

Church, Southaven, concentrated on a session entitled Characteristics of Children and How to Teach Age Appropriately. Penny Young of Michael Memorial Church, Gulfport, focused on a session entitled Characteristics of a Good Teacher.

Afternoon activities were varied and included crafts, games, and free time. Reeves said she was impressed by the future Sunday school teachers. "You could see how much they love Jesus and how much they want to teach boys and girls," she pointed out.

Reeves will return to Ukraine in December for a 2004 planning session. She hopes those plans will include a more advanced conference for children's Sunday School teachers, along with an opportunity to take basic concepts to village churches.

In a letter sent to Mississippi Baptists via Rhodes, Bronislav thanked each team

member, the Missions Mobilization Department, and all who made the conference possible.

"It was an unforgettable week for 85 young ladies and men, who came from different villages and towns of the Odessa region. And I believe that those young people, after returning to their churches with knowledge and spiritual strength, will be a great tool of our Lord to use them in ministry for children," he wrote.

MBCB missions mobilization efforts are supported by gifts to the Margaret Lackey State Missions Offering, and supported administratively by gifts to the Mississippi Cooperative Program.

For more information on missions mobilization in Mississippi, contact Rhodes P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Telephone: (601) 292-3239 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651, ext. 239. E-mail: krhodes@mbcb.org.

Crews stepping down from Golden Gate Seminary

MILL VALLEY, Calif (BP) — Golden Gate Seminary trustees approved transition actions for the presidency and three directors during their Oct. 14 meeting on the seminary's Mill Valley, Calif., campus.

President William O. Crews was elected to fill the transitional role of chancellor as the trustees begin a search for a new president. The longest-tenured of the six Southern Baptist Convention seminary presidents, Crews was elected to lead Golden Gate in 1986.

"I will continue to give leadership to the institution until a new president is elected and installed," Crews told trustees. "I will then do all I can to see that any influence I might have is transferred to the person God has already chosen to be our new leader."

Although officially vacat-



Crews

ing the office of the president and taking up the post of chancellor, Crews will maintain the duties of president and chief executive until a new leader is elected and in place, officials noted.

In the other staffing actions, trustees approved the hiring of T. Christopher Turner as director for the Pacific Northwest campus.

Turner earned a doctor of philosophy degree in educational leadership from Washington State University in 2001. A member of the Golden Gate campus staff since 1998, he has served in

such roles as director of recruitment and admissions, adjunct faculty and director of enrollment management and institutional effectiveness.

David William Johnson was elected as director of the Arizona campus.

Johnson holds the doctor of philosophy and master's degrees from Southwestern Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas. He has taught as an adjunct professor at the Arizona campus since 1995 and in similar positions at other universities.

A longtime leader in Arizona Baptist work, Johnson has served as president of the Arizona Southern Baptist Convention and a trustee of Grand Canyon University. Since 1994 he has been pastor of First Southern Baptist Church in Phoenix and earlier pastored other churches in Arizona and Texas.

Joseph Raymond Tallman, a specialist in Christian ministry to Muslims, was elected director of the David and Faith Kim School of Intercultural Studies.

Tallman has served on the faculty of Golden Gate as professional-in-residence during the past academic year and for 10 years he served with OC International coordinating mission efforts aimed at Muslim people groups in North Africa. Earlier, he served on the faculties of Moody Bible Institute and Calvary Bible College in Missouri.

Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary is a Cooperative Program ministry of the Southern Baptist Convention and operates five campuses in Northern California, Southern California, Pacific Northwest, Arizona and Colorado.

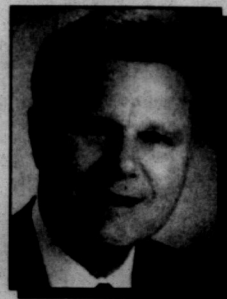
LIGHTNING BUGS AMONG US

As a kid I was always fascinated with lightning bugs. That part of the kid in me has never gone away. To this day I watch for them and am fascinated on a dark, dark, summer night to see those flashing lights out there against the black backdrop.

Recently, I read an account of an incident that happened in a little girl's life many years ago. The story was told by Mrs. Bessie Chambers, who is now in her 90th year and a faithful member of Highland Baptist Church in Meridian, Mississippi. Mrs. Bessie is still active in every way and her mind is even more active than her body. She told the story of how, as a young girl, she and her family were visiting with an aunt and her family. The children were outside playing, chasing, and catching lightning bugs. One of her little cousins caught one of the lightning bugs and held it in her hand until the little creature died. When the girl saw that it was dead, she said to her little brother, "Look, this one died without turning its light off!" Sure enough, the little lightning bug had died but its light was still on.

As I heard of that story, I thought of that beautiful word from the Lord in Revelation 14:13, "I heard a voice from Heaven saying unto me write, blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth, yea saith the spirit, that they may rest from their labors and their works do follow them." Did you hear that? Those last five words say, "...their works do follow them." That is true and I then began to think of all the lightning bugs that I have known in Baptist life. I thought of the people who have departed from here and gone on to be with the Lord, but they died without turning their lights off. Their witness, their influence, and their blessings continue. Their works do follow them.

There are a lot of ways that you can, at the end of this life, leave a light burning in the darkness of this world by being a Baptist lightning bug. One way to leave your light burning would be through your faithfulness. As you faithfully serve the Lord you are not only touching lives at the moment and you



Directions

Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

are not only having an impact right now, but you literally are putting in place building blocks and foundation stones upon which others will continue to build.

There is little said but so much that needs to be emphasized concerning the consistency with our walk with the Lord and our faithfulness through the years. It is that consistency and that faithful day-by-day service for Christ that makes a difference for generations to come. When I think of those who have gone before us who have made such a difference, I think of people like Lottie Moon, as she literally gave her life as a missionary for over 40 years to the people of China. Her legacy is not that she participated in one great event one day but for a lifetime. One day at a time Lottie walked with Jesus and touched lives all around her. Then and now, that faithfulness bore fruit!

This is not just a verse reserved for some super-special saint. No, it's true again and again in the lives of those folks who have walked with Jesus and been faithful to Him. For me, personally, there is a gallery in the corridors of my mind on which hang portraits of great saints who have made a difference in my life: men and women who have cared about me, encouraged me, taught me, and challenged me; RA leaders who invested their time so that a little boy would know about Jesus and missions; Vacation Bible School teachers who would share the Gospel in clear, child-like terms so that I could understand and respond; preachers who stood strong and tall and yet were caring enough to stop and talk to a kid as though they really cared; and then the Bible teachers, college professors, and denominational leaders, most of whom are gone, who left their light on in me.

Another way that people leave their light burning is through the Mississippi

Baptist Foundation. The Foundation is an integral part of the work of Christ in our state. More and more people are becoming aware of the fact that when they are gone they are able to leave in place investments that can go on touching lives, helping our institutions or agencies, caring for children, scholarshiping

students, and supporting our missionaries. The Mississippi Baptist Foundation is not just a financial institution; it is a ministry that enables us to leave the light on when we are gone.

Every year that passes, I have the privilege of hearing the stories and seeing some of the students preparing for ministry who would not be able to continue their preparation apart from the support that is offered them. That support comes from someone who was mindful of the need that may come in the future and provided endowment scholarships to support students in need. The beautiful thing about it is that anyone is able to set up an account with even a small amount of money. It can, in time, grow to be a brighter and brighter light. All you need do is contact the Mississippi Baptist Foundation at (601) 292-3210 and they will help you. The Foundation is not just about money, it is about leaving your light on!

As I thought about the lightning bug, it occurred to me that one other way we can leave the light on is through our families. I suppose that that should be, and probably is for most of us, our first thought. I want my children to know the Lord and serve Him as well as my grandchildren, great grandchildren, and great, great grandchildren! I am the recipient of the beautiful legacy of faith experienced by and shared through my family. Yet, I want to be more than just a recipient. I want my children to know and love that same Christ and to know the strength of that same faith. It is glorious and beyond description to see them serving the Lord.

If the Lord tarries His coming each one of us will ultimately and finally come to the end of the road of life. The race will be run, our service will be ended, and we will be gone. I pray that when I die I will die without turning my light off!

Bibliocipher

By Charles Marx
copyright 2003

CTL XO KOTB XAN KCM,

CTL IPZZHTOL KABX BXO

IXAOR ESAONBN CTL

ICEBCATN, XPK XO

ZAUXB FOBSM XAZ

HTBP BXOZ.

JHGO
BKOTBM-BKP: RPHS

Clue: R = F

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Mark 14:35

Iraqi Baptists mapping ministry plans for war-torn country

AMMAN, Jordan (BP)--Baptists from across the Middle East gathered in Amman, Jordan, Oct. 10 to take part in a unique commissioning service.

Douglas Baba, pastor of an Iraqi congregation in the town of al-Fuhais in Jordan, was appointed as pastor/evangelist by the newly formed Baptist Union of Iraq and will soon be furthering Baptist work there.

Also commissioned was an Egyptian Baptist, Izzat Shehata, a graduate of the Jordan Evangelical Theological Seminary, as a missionary to Mauretania in North Africa.

Participating in the service were the members of the Amman Baptist Church, the oldest of Jordan's 17 Baptist congregations, and representatives from the Jordanian and Lebanese Baptist conventions. Staff members from various mission organizations also were present, including the Southern Baptist International Mission Board and Campus Crusade for Christ, which has a strong presence in Jordan.

Led by the Amman church's pastor, Fawaz Ameish, the ser-

vice, which included an impassioned sermon from Charles Costa, a Lebanese Baptist, ended with a laying on of hands in which Baptist leaders filed past the two men sitting on the platform. Either aloud or privately, each prayed for the men and their future ministry. Gifts were presented and their wives joined them for a final blessing.

The commissioning of Baba to work in Iraq is the first stage of an evangelistic and church-planting initiative by the Baptist Union of Iraq. Baptist work in Iraq started in 1985 as a development within the Presbyterian church and was led by Nabil Sara, a Presbyterian elder, and Khalil Samara, a missionary from Brazil.

In 1988, there were 500 Baptists, meeting in 50 homes; however, in common with all churches, numbers declined after the first Gulf War in 1991, largely because of emigration.

Baptists became a denomination in their own right in 1997. There are now five congregations in Iraq, two in Baghdad and three in the north of the

country, all meeting in homes. In September, a baptismal service was held at a home using a portable swimming pool in which 31 people were baptized.

The Baptist Union of Iraq was formed in order to provide a unified organization to enable effective mission. A priority will be the planting of a church in the Kerekh area of Baghdad, which has a population of 3 million but no evangelical church.

Muthafar Yacoub, moderator of the Baptist Union of Iraq and one of three Iraqi exiles returning as Baptist leaders, said at a BUI general assembly meeting earlier in the day, "This is a new phase in our mission. I invite you to share in the ministry to which God has called us, and participate in this exciting adventure."

Another of the three, Mishiel Edward, who will return to Iraq when resources become available, said, "I think this is the time God wants to show His mercy. The way will be tough, but there will be blessing. I have peace inside. In five or 10 years I want to see more people coming to Jesus, and the cross everywhere."

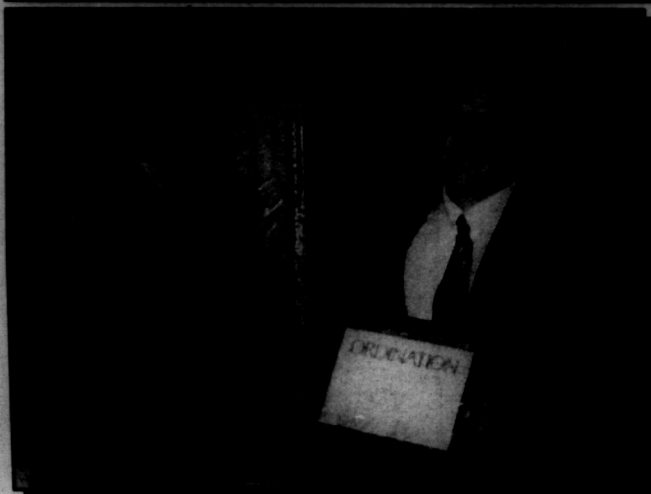


Baba will return to Baghdad with his wife and three children as soon as accommodations can be found.

The International Mission Board of the Southern Baptist convention is working alongside Iraqi and other Baptists in developing ministries in Iraq.

FOR IRAQ — Muthafar Yacoub (right), moderator of the newly formed Iraq Baptist Union; leads in prayer for the union's various initiatives. Among those joining Yacoub in prayer is Southern Baptist missionary Brian Barlow (left). (BP photo by Joni B. Hannigan)

JUST FOR THE RECORD



Morrow, pastor; and Butler

Holly Church, Alcorn, recently ordained Chris Butler as a deacon. Pictured (from left) are Tony Morrow, pastor, and Butler.

Macendonia Church, Petal, recently ordained Greg Dye as deacon. Pictured (from left) are Dye, his wife Amy, and Jerry Doggett, pastor.



Greg & Amy Dye and Jerry Doggett, pastor

The Brotherhood men (pictured) of Amaziah Church, Hickory Flat, recently installed their first baptistry. Dana Holmes



Brotherhood of Amaziah Church, Hickory Flat



Baptism Participants of Amaziah Church, Hickory Flat

did the painting. On August 24 (pictured, from left) Michael Howell, Bryon Nowlin, Gina Maxey, Jenna Nolley, and Ashley Alexander were baptized.

Calvary Chapel, Parchman, honored Terry Satchfield of Rome on his 86th birthday on August 24. He was presented a plaque for his service. He continues to cut the grass on the 3 acre church campus throughout the summer months. Pictured are Satchfield (fifth from left) and his family members.

The GAs, RAs, and Mission Friends of North Carrollton Church, North Carrollton, presented kids meal toys, donated by McDonald's and Sonic, and kool-aid to Billy and Rebecca Williams to use as a ministry tool for children in Southeast Asia.



Young Women of Sylvarena Church, Sylvarena



Terry Satchfield and Family

The Sylvarena Young Women from Sylvarena Church, Sylvarena, celebrated August birthdays at Bay Springs Nursing Home. Residents were given a bouquet of flowers along with cake, fruit, and



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At the Mississippi Baptist Foundation, we provide information as well as church seminars on a wide range of programs and financial services. Our staff will help you make the best decision for you.
Call us at (601) 292-3210.

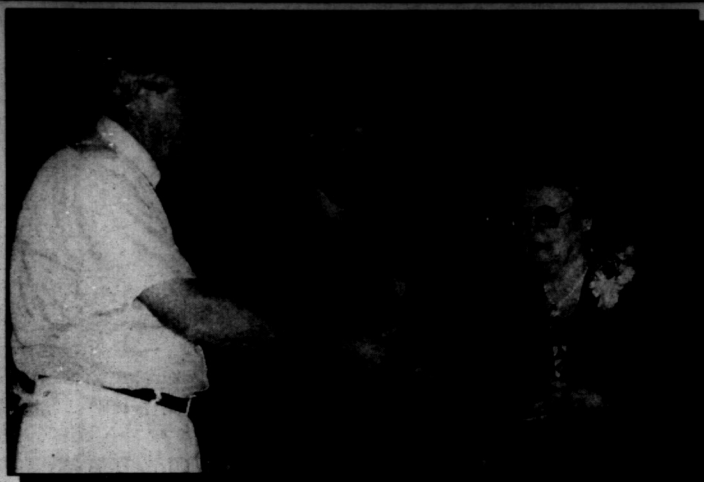
MBF

THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST FOUNDATION

JUST FOR THE RECORD



Callie Tisdale and Harold Ishee



Cline, Taylor, and Moore



Connie & Kent Spence and William Mann

Strong Hope Church, Wesson, held a WMU Recognition service on August 31. The GAs, RAs, Acteens, Mission Friends, and youth on missions were represented. Three Acteens, Amanda Jackson, Maggie Morgan, and Mandy Elkins, completed Mission Quest and received a \$200 scholarship to further their education. Evelyn King is the WMU director and David Crowe is pastor.

Callie Tisdale of Lowery Creek Church, Seminary, has been the secretary and treasurer for

the past 40 years and retired in August. A reception was given in her honor and she was presented with a silver tray. Harold Ishee is pastor.

Pilgrims Rest Church, Crystal Springs, recognized Estelle Lamb, Hannah Moak, and Dorothy Powers for Sunday School Attendance recently. Pictured (from left) are Lamb, nine years; Moak, two years; and Powers, 26 years.

Linwood Church, Union, ordained Kent Spence as deacon on September 7. Pictured (from left) are his wife Connie, Spence, and William J. Mann.



Lamb, Moak, and Powers

Arkabutla Church, Arkabutla, honored Josephine Moore for 77 years of faithful service on August 17. Pictured are D. Tim Cline, pastor, and Milton Taylor presenting Moore with a plaque.



WMU Recognition Service of Strong Hope, Wesson

Fellowship of the Parks Baptist Church

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tdaniel@rivesleavell.com

NEW HOPE BAPTIST CHURCH IN Meridian is seeking a full-time associate pastor of youth and education. Please send resumes or letters of interest to New Hope Baptist Church, attention search committee, 6573 Highway 145 South, Meridian, MS 39301.

ORGANIST, CASTLEWOODS Baptist Church. Send a letter of interest or resume to 175 Stonecastle Drive, Brandon, MS 39047, via mail or fax. Fax number (601) 992-2623. For information call (601) 992-9977.

PIANIST/KEYBOARDIST NEEDED, Southside Baptist Church, paid position. For more information call (601) 372-9161.

HOMEcomings & RIVALS

Topeka, Jayess: Nov. 16-19; Sunday, 11 a.m., dinner on the grounds, and 7 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Rick Kennedy, East McComb, McComb, speaking; Justin Smith, music; Dale Authement, pastor; all are welcome.

Dublin Church, Carson: Nov. 2-5; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Gene Douglas, evangelist; Benji Lott, music; Pat Nations, pastor.

Leesburg, Morton: Nov. 2; Sunday School, 9:30 a.m.; worship, 10:30 a.m.; dinner on the grounds will follow; Julius Thompson, preaching; Jeff Jones, worship.

Lula, Jackson: Nov. 2; 102nd anniversary; worship, 11 a.m.; a covered dish lunch and special music will follow; Joe Little, pastor; for more information, call (601) 925-5271.

Harrisville, Harrisville: Nov. 2-5; Sunday, 10 a.m., lunch will follow, 6:30 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Dwight Smith, preaching; Brad Day, music; Ron Bush, pastor.

First, Brooklyn: Nov. 9-14; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Mon.-Fri., 7 p.m.; James Messer, Theodore, Ala., evangelist; Phillip Willis, Baton Rouge, La., music; James Taylor, pastor.

First, Sumrall: Nov. 9-12; Sunday, 10 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Billy Smith, Madison, evangelist; Ronnie Cottingham, Agricola, music.

First, Hickory Flat: Nov. 16; dedication of Family Life Center; worship, 10 a.m.; dinner at noon; afternoon singing, The Landmarks and Miracles of Grace; Johnny Rakestraw, pastor; Doug Rakestraw, music.

Park Haven, Laurel: Nov. 9-12; 40th anniversary; Sunday, 11 a.m., dinner will follow; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Henry Freeman, Doug Moore, and Steve Pouncy, speaking; Billy Hyatt, Thom Lambert, and Jelly Wellborn, music; James Balliet, pastor; Jimmy Downs, minister of music.

Agricola, Lucedale: Nov. 9; centennial; worship, 9:30 a.m.; noon meal; afternoon worship, 3 p.m.; Bryce Evans, Don Boone, and Eddie Davidson, speaking; Quincy T. Curtis, interim pastor; Brad Day, minister of praise and worship; Mark Williams, student minister; for more information, call (601) 947-2460.

JUST FOR THE RECORD



Judy Golz and Jill Briscoe



Morgan & Rayburn, pastor



1st - 6th grade GAs of North Carrollton Church, North Carrollton

The Women's Ministry of First Church, Grenada, will host their Winter Women's Conference, with noted Bible teacher and author, Jill Briscoe, and her daughter, Judy Golz, as guest speakers. The conference is January 9 from 6:30-8:30 p.m. and January 10 from 8 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. The conference theme, Building Better Relationships, is based on the book of Ruth. Other topics to be addressed are Coping with Difficult Relationships and Family Relationships. For more information, call (662) 226-3661.

The 1st-6th grade GA classes of North Carrollton Church, North Carrollton, held a Canned Food Drive in recognition of World Hunger Day on October 12. The food items col-

lected will help replenish the church's food pantry so that they may be used as part of the church's ministry program. Pictured (from left, front) are Mauri Suggs, Laynee Claire Marchant, Maggie Lloyd, Ann Marie McClain, (back) Mary Claire Martin, Morgan Clark, Jade Wrenn, Taylor Brower, and Julia McClellan.

The GAs of First Church, Bruce, celebrated the 90th birthday of GAs September 24. On display for the girls were GA scepters, a crown, capes, a charm bracelet, and a GA photo of Vickie Allred. The girls enjoyed eating birthday cake.

First Church, Brooklyn, ordained Mike Lee to the deacon ministry October 12. Pictured (from left) are Lee

and James Taylor, pastor.

Calvary Church, Canton, held an honor day for Albert Morgan September 21. Morgan, 85, visits the hospital, those that are homebound, and takes friends to the doctor and stores. He was presented a reward for a job well done. Pictured (from left) are Morgan and Tom Rayburn, pastor.

Sallis Church, Sallis, licensed Lynn Cain and Frank Vaughn to the ministry on September 31. Pictured (from left) are Cain, former youth director, Thomas Wicker, pastor, and Vaughn, youth director.



Mike Lee & James Taylor, pastor

Morrison Heights Church, Clinton, will hold Fall Harvest on October 31 from 6-8 p.m. Activities include a space walk, obstacle course, and game booths. Admission is free. A hotdog supper will be served for \$2. Costumes are optional, but no scary ones. This event is open to all children and parents in the area.



GAs of First Church, Bruce



Lynn Cain, Thomas Wicker, pastor; and Frank Vaughn

OBITUARIES

J. D. Joslin, 87, of New Albany died September 9.

Joslin grew up in Glen along with his wife, the former Vera Maybelle Strickland. He attended Clarke College in the ministerial program and later received his degree in Bible at Blue Mountain College.

He pastored several churches throughout Mississippi including Glendale Church, College Hill Church, Interstate Church in Shaw, Burnsville Church, New Prospect Church in Iuka, Walnut Church, Calvary Church in Batesville, Hickory Flat Church, and

Pharsalia Church in Pope.

He is survived by his wife; five sons, Wendell D. Joslin, Joe E. Joslin, Jack W. Joslin, Frank A. Joslin, and Terry M. Joslin; a daughter, Sarah Beth Hajeh; 10 grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

R. V. "Alcus" Greer, 85, of Brookhaven died October 6.

Greer attended North Greenville College, Mississippi College, and SE Baptist Theological Seminary, Wake Forest, N. C., along with additional graduate study at Lutheran Theological Seminary

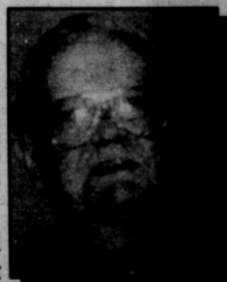
and Emory University.

He served as pastor of churches in Mississippi, North Carolina, and South Carolina. He taught Bible at Wingate University for 14 years, serving interim pastorates and supply during that time. He also served on the North Carolina Convention Board.

Greer was a member of First Church Brookhaven.

He is survived by his wife of over 58 years, Gertrude J. Greer; daughter, Tommye G. Trippe; three sisters, Wilma Grace Brister, Bernice G. Sumrall, and Gladys G. Reeves; and 3 grandchildren.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to the Hospice in Brookhaven.



Joslin

STAFF CHANGES

Corinth Church, Tallahatchie, recently called **Dax Summerhill** as pastor. Summerhill, a Madison native, attended seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, and is currently working on his Doctorate at Mid-America Seminary, Memphis.



Summerhill

Mt. Vernon Church, Newton, has called **William R. Savell** as minister of music effective September 1. He is a 2002 honor graduate of the University of Southern Mississippi holding a degree in elementary education. He is pursuing a degree from East Community College to obtain a degree in funeral service technology. Savell is employed as a staff member of James F. Webb Funeral Home. He previously served as minister of music at Pinckney Church, Union.



Savell

River Bend Church, Aberdeen, has called **Dustin Tutor** as youth minister. Tutor is a student at Itawamba Community College, Fulton, and serves at River Bend part time.

Benji Lott has been called as minister of music and youth at

Dublin Church, Covington/Jeff Davis Association. **Pat Nations** is pastor.

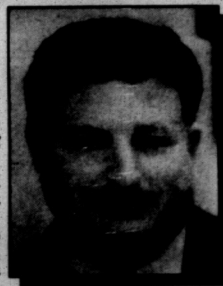
Center Ridge Church, Yazoo City, called **Daryl Oster** as pastor.



Lilly

CrossRoads Church, Decatur, has called **Justin Chaney** as youth pastor/minister of music. **Scott Engle** is pastor.

First Church, Ovett, called **Bill Riley** as interim pastor in July. First Church has also called **Lavon Welborn** as interim music director.



Turcotte

The Missions Committee of the Jasper Association presented **Harvey Lilly** as their nominee for the position of Association Missions Director for Jasper Association at the quarterly meeting of the Executive Committee on September 8. Since Lilly's retirement he has been involved with a Church Building Ministry Group out of

Brookhaven. He has assisted others in the building of two churches in Jasper County. He serves as volunteer Chaplain for the Hospice program, treasurer for the Jasper Association, and is a member of the advisory board for the Pro Care Home Health and Hospice program.



Roberson

Jim Turcotte, Clinton, on the staff of Mississippi College since 1994, was recently named Vice President for Enrollment Services. Turcotte has served as Director of Admissions and Dean of Enrollment Services. He received his BSBA degree from



Hayes

Mississippi College, the Master of Arts in Religious Education from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, and the Doctor of Philosophy in Higher Education from the University of North Texas. He previously served as Vice President for University

Advancement and Director of Admissions at Dallas Baptist University. Turcotte is a member of the First Church, Clinton, where he serves as a deacon and is director of the young married adult Sunday School department.

Midway Church, Vardaman, has called **Gary Roberson** as pastor effective October 26. Roberson is a graduate of Blue Mountain College, Liberty University, and Southwest Bible Seminary. He is scheduled to Graduate with his Doctorate of Ministry in December. His former place of service was Amity Church, Chickasaw County.

Hillcrest Church, Byram, has called **Jamie Hayes** as worship leader. Hayes is former worship leader at Mt. Zion Church, Florence.

Macedonia Church, Myrtle, called **Jason M. Marlin** as pastor effective September 12. Marlin attended Blue Mountain College and Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary. He previously served at Flag Lake Church, Sarah.



YOU CAN RESPOND RIGHT NOW!

Simply share the following prayer with God in your own words:

1. Lord, I admit that I need you. *(I have sinned.)*
2. I want forgiveness for my sins and freedom from eternal death. *(I repent.)*
3. I believe Jesus died and rose from the grave to forgive my sins and to restore my relationship with you. *(I believe in Jesus.)*
4. By faith, I invite Jesus Christ into my life. From this time on, I want to live in a loving relationship with him. *(I receive Christ as my Savior and Lord.)*

But as many as received him, to them he gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in his name (John 1:12).

If you make a decision for Jesus Christ today, contact a local Baptist church for spiritual guidance.

COLLEGE & SEMINARY NEWS

Hard work paid off for two **William Carey College** student publications October 11. The Baptist Press Student Journalism Conference in Nashville, Tenn., ended with the Excellence in Journalism Banquet. Of more than 600 entries in 30 categories, The Cobbler newspaper and the Crusader yearbook won 12 awards. Among the awards was a second place finish for Newspaper Overall. The 2002-2003 Crusader also received recognition from the Baptist Press with an overall rating of Outstanding. The two publications brought home three first place awards, five second place and four third place. WCC tied with Union University for the most awards.

Mississippi College Distinguished Alumnus of the Year awards are given to outstanding graduates who have exemplified remarkable service in their field. **Jerry Sullivan**, Magee, has been selected as the Distinguished Mathematics and Computer Science Alumnus. Sullivan graduated with a B.S. in Mathematics from Mississippi College in 1959 and a M.Ed. in 1970. **William Edward Kinchen**, Jackson, has been selected as the Distinguished Alumnus in the School of Business. Kinchen received his B.S. in Business

from Mississippi College in 1959. **Mary Ann Henriques**, Jackson, has been selected as the 2003 Distinguished Alumna from the School of Nursing. Henriques received her B.S.N. from Mississippi College in 1973, her Masters in Nursing from the University of Southern Mississippi in 1990, and her Ph.D. in Education Administration from the University of Southern Mississippi in 2002.

First Church, Amory, awarded **Jenny Harrington** a \$4,664 scholarship from the Lawrence and Louise Palmer Scholarship Fund. Harrington is attending Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. She is pursuing a master's degree with plans to become a missionary. Dick Palmer established the scholarship fund in memory of his parents to assist students in receiving the necessary education for full-time Christian service.

William Carey College will host the fifth annual Pine Belt College Fair November 4 from 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. in the Student Conference Center and Wilkes Dining Hall, Hattiesburg. College and military representatives from Mississippi, Alabama, Louisiana, Tennessee, Rhode

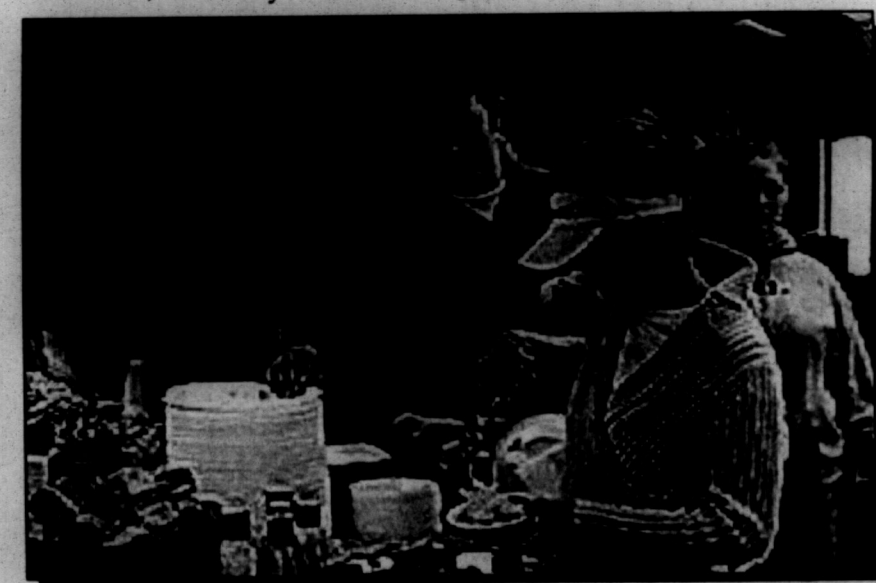
Island and Indiana are scheduled to attend. Other agencies will be available to answer questions regarding student loans, financial planning, and specific information regarding Mississippi Tuition Assistance Grant and the Mississippi Eminent Scholar Grant. For more information, call (601) 318-6218 or 1-800-962-5991, ext. 103.

For the third consecutive year, **Blue Mountain College** has been the recipient of the Champions of Character Award by the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA). To receive this award, a member institution of the NAIA must provide on-campus programming related to five core character values: respect, responsibility, integrity, servant leadership, and sportsmanship. The Champions of Character initiative targets student-athletes, coaches, and spectators.

The 2003 edition of **Blue Mountain College's** yearbook, the Mountaineer, won several awards during the Baptist Press National Student Journalism Conference that was held October 9-11 in Nashville, Tenn. Blue Mountain College won second place in the Best Overall/Single Spread Design category and

first place in the Best Overall Yearbook category.

First Church, Ovett, fed 128 students at **Jones County Junior College** during Feed the Baptist Student Union on October 9. First Church feeds the BSU once a year to help them raise money for summer missions. Those who assisted in the feeding were Marie Graham, Dorris Dykes, Patrick Collins, Mike and Patricia King, and Howard and Maude Tisdale. The students were fed fried chicken, chicken pot pie, salad, vegetables, desserts, and drinks. Other suppliers of food were Patsy Eaks, Cyndie Robinson, and Sally Collins.



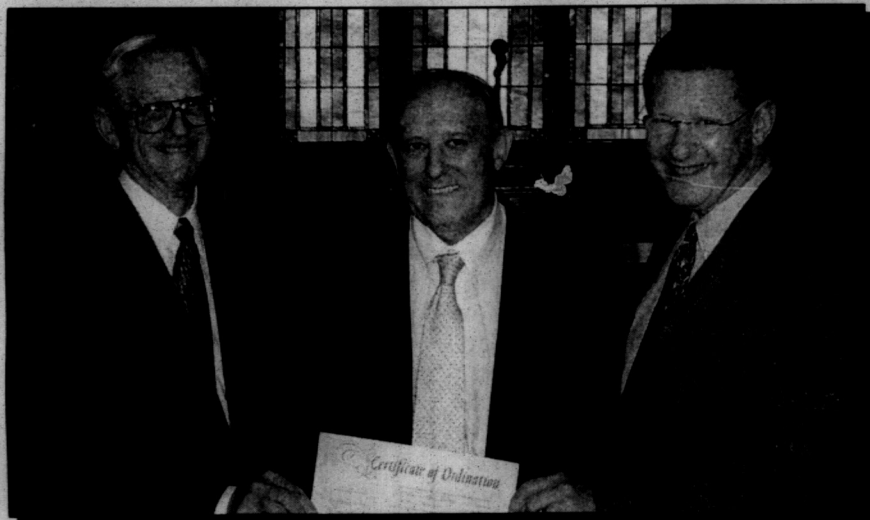
BSU members of Jones County Junior College, Ellisville

NAMES IN THE NEWS



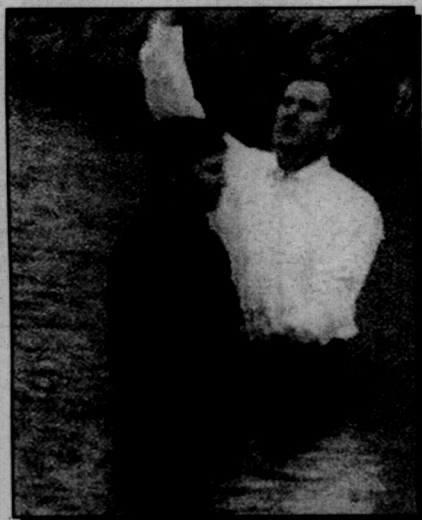
Mixon, Raney, Norwood, Burd, and Lindsey

First Church, Cleveland, recently recognized Mary Claire Norwood on her 40th anniversary as church organist. The Celebration Choir presented her with a gift and a reception in her



Wicker, Cain, and Waggoner

honor. Norwood has been a faithful accompanist since 1963. Pictured (from left) are Jerry Mixon, MBCB, interim pastor, Jim Raney, Norwood, Milton Burd, and Betty Lindsey.



Strider & Vincent, pastor



Dean, Phillips, and Thompson, pastor

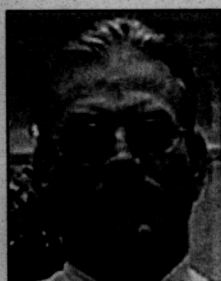
Sallis Church, Sallis, recently ordained Lynn Cain to the ministry on October 5. Pictured (from left) are Thomas Wicker, pastor, Cain, and Bobby Waggoner, Director of Missions of Attala County.

Two employees of First Church, Picayune, recently celebrated milestone anniversaries. Verbie Lewis came to work for First Church in 1983 and has been a faithful employee, working in janitorial services, for twenty years. Fred



Lewis

Henley presented Lewis with a plaque commemorating this milestone anniversary in a recognition service on October 5. William (Bill) R. Stevenson has served as Business Administrator for First Church since 1993.



Stevenson

Stevenson was presented a plaque commemorating his service to First Church. They were joined by family members at the service.

Schooner Valley Baptist Church, Houlika, held an ordination service on August 31. Pictured are Linn Hughes presenting certificates to John Fleming and Bobby Murphree.

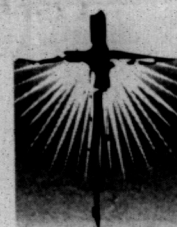
First Church, Charleston, recently held a Baptism service on the banks of the Tallahatchie River at Strider Landing. Pictured is the candidate, John Burt Strider, with Mark Vincent, pastor. Others who were baptized at the river include Scott McBride and Sherry Breland. Prior to this outdoor service, during the Morning Worship Service, Strider's wife, Stephanie, was baptized in the Baptismal Pool at First Church.



Sharon, Brynn and Brooke Knight



Fleming, Murphree, and Hughes



MISSISSIPPI
BAPTISTS

Correction

The date for the upcoming One Voice concert is November 9, not November 17 as listed in the Housetops section of the October 16 issue. For more information on the concert, contact the MBCB Church Music Department at P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Telephone: (601) 292-3267 or toll free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651, ext. 267. E-mail: palford@mbcb.org

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NORRIS BOOKBINDING COMPANY, Inc., old Bibles rebound. Also church bulletins and hymnals. For more information call (662) 453-7424 or fax us at (662) 455-6743. Located at 107 North Stone Avenue, Greenwood, MS 38930.

KINGWOOD FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH in Kingwood, Texas is now accepting resumes for Minister of Adult Discipleship to lead in planning, implementing and evaluating the needs of our adult christian education ministry. Please send resumes to KFBC, attn: minister of adults search comm., 2303 Tree Lane, Kingwood, TX 77339 or email resume to eowen@kfbctx.org.

CUSTOM STAINED GLASS WINDOWS for churches and homes. Stained Glassworks, Inc. (800) 605-2970.

LEARN CHALK ART MINISTRY BY video. For more information write: P.O. Box 1206, Fairfield, TX 75840. Email larsin@pflash.com.

ATTENTION PASTORS, STAFF, EVENT coordinators. "Celebrate The Family," worship and conferences featuring singer, speaker, musical ventriloquist, Lee Pitts Spooner. Banquets, conferences, and retreats. For free video call (251) 660-7628.

SEBREN'S SIDING, JACKSON, MISS. Christian owned home improvements, vinyl siding, windows, metal roofs, patio covers, screen/glass rooms. (601) 992-2092 or (800) 453-2994. Don & Rita Sebre, owners.

HEIDELBERG STAINED GLASS, Meridian. Design, fabrication, repair. Fax illustrations to (601) 483-7958 or call (800) 368-2705.

MINISTER OF MUSIC, TRINITY UNITED Methodist, Opelika, Alabama. Salary \$40,000-60,000. The minister of music is responsible for leading and overseeing the entire ministry of music. Trinity is a conservative, evangelical church called to be an

equipping center for the purpose of winning and discipling Christians. Contact: Scott Kaak at (334) 745-2632.

LEESVILLE - FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH: Full-time youth and recreation minister. Send resumes with photo to: Youth Pastor Search Committee, First Baptist Church of Leesville, P.O. Box 1568, 1400 Nolan Trace, Leesville, LA 71446; or email fbcleesville@wnonline.net.

HOPPER GLASS STUDIO, CUSTOM church windows, reworking and repair, Columbus/Jackson, (877) 477-1899.

NORTH MONROE BAPTIST CHURCH IS looking for a full-time student minister. Email resumes to youthsearch@northmonroe.com. Or mail them to North Monroe Baptist Church at 210 Finks Hideaway Road, Monroe, LA 71203. You can learn more about the church and its ministries at www.northmonroe.com.

CHURCH PEW UPHOLSTERY, free estimates. Davis Upholstery, Quitman, Miss., phone (601) 776-6617.

FAMILY BIBLE STUDY

Experiencing the Gospel's Power

Acts 3:1-8, 11-16, 19-20

By Jon Daniels

Mel Gibson has taken harsh criticism from a vocal minority concerning his production of "The Passion," a movie that graphically portrays Jesus' suffering and crucifixion. It's interesting that those who regularly defend the immorality and indecency on the silver screen as "creative license" have not rallied to defend Gibson's right to do the same. Nonetheless, in the face of increasing criticism and little support from Hollywood, Gibson is driven by a sense of purpose and need. In defining why he is doing this against such odds, he said, "I have a deep need to tell this story." (People, Mar. 3, 2003, pg. 14).

As believers, we should have the same passion and purpose about sharing the life-changing Good News about Jesus Christ. We should have a "deep need to

tell this story." We are afforded opportunities all the time to tell the story of Jesus and how His love has impacted our lives. We have experienced the Gospel's power in our lives. What an awesome privilege to see others experience that power in their lives, too!

BE SENSITIVE TO OPPORTUNITIES - 3:1-8

Acts 2 ends with a description of what was happening in the early church. One can see how the members of the church were devoted to one another in so many ways. You might get the impression that the church is a kind of mutual aid society where the members have a more inward focus.

As we move into Chapter 3, we can quickly see that as believers, we are saved to serve, reaching out to those in need around us. Peter and John were definitely con-



Daniels

cerned about this man who was not yet a member of the Body of Christ. They were sensitive to his needs, his condition, and to this opportunity given to them to share the Gospel with him. They used the power of God that was available to them to heal the man, leading him to praise God.

In a sermon once preached by my father-in-law, Mack Massey, he compared this man's condition to the lostness of humanity. He stated, "We see a picture of humanity without God; for he is lame since birth, helpless, destitute, and more concerned about material needs than about spiritual needs. He is near the temple, but outside it."

Everywhere we turn, we see those who are in desperate need. We must be sensitive to the opportunities that the Lord gives to us. When we are, we will have the privilege at times to see the power of the Gospel at work in another's life, transforming them from death to life.

ALWAYS POINT TO JESUS - 3:11-16

Even "while the beggar held on to Peter and John" (v. 11), these Spirit-sensitive apostles saw God opening up a wonderful opportunity for them to point this man and the all the people who "came running to them in the place called Solomon's Colonnade" (v. 11) to Jesus. It would have been very easy and very tempting to bask in the glory and recognition that this miraculous moment brought to them. Instead, Peter pointed the people to Jesus, making it very clear that it was "by faith in the name of Jesus, [that] this man was made strong" (v. 16a). This was an incredible display of the power of the Gospel in a person's life, and Peter wanted to make sure that the crowd understood who the source of healing was. J.W. McGorman said, "Peter's disclaimer was neither a needless modesty nor a wasted effort, for people are prone to attribute to men what only the Lord can do."

In the word of the kingdom of God, 'Lord' and 'servant' are two categories that never should be confused. If the two roles are confused, immature believers will give to a mere servant like Peter a devotion

that rightly belongs only to Jesus Christ as Lord" (Acts: The Gospel for All People, 1990 Jan. Bible Study, pg. 21).

CLEARLY SHARE GOD'S PLAN - 3:19-20

After Peter pointed to Jesus, he went on the clearly share with those who had gathered what they needed to do in order to be saved. Repentance was the foundation of his message to them.

Repentance is a change of mind that leads to a change of life. As the FAITH outline states, to repent means to turn from something — our sin and self — and turn to Someone, trusting Jesus alone for our salvation. God's plan is that when we repent, He will wipe out our sins (what wonderful good news!), bring His refreshing to our lives, and give us something wonderful to look forward to the coming of Jesus. Anyone who repents and trusts Christ alone for their eternal life will experience the life-changing power of the Gospel. That is God's plan.

Daniels is pastor of Monticello Church, Monticello.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

Reconciliation

Colossians 1:15-23

By Laura Russell

Reconcile, reconciliation, reconciling, reconciled. These are big words; could be intimidating words. Webster's Dictionary defines reconcile as: bringing into harmony or to make compatible. The Living Insight Bible Glossary defines reconciliation as "the removal of the barrier of sin between God and humanity by the work of the Lord Jesus Christ on the cross—with the result that no barrier to fellowship with God remains." Simply put, reconciliation means to come to God and the only way to come to God is through Jesus Christ because of the cross.

OUR SAVIOR (vv 15-18).

These verses contain some of the strongest statements about the divine nature of Christ found in the Bible. Jesus is not only equal to God, He is God. He not only reflects God, He reveals God to us. He came from heaven, not from the dust of the ground and is Lord of all. He is completely holy and He has authority to judge the world. Therefore, Christ is supreme over all creation. Jesus Christ has no equal and no rival. He is Lord of all. Because Christ is spiritually supreme in the universe, shouldn't we give Him first place in all our thoughts and activities? We, like the Colossian believers, must believe that Jesus is God, or our Christian faith is hollow, misdi-



Russell

rected, and meaningless. This is a central truth of Christianity.

HIS CROSS (vv 19-20).

After further stating Jesus' deity, Paul declared reconciliation with God is possible only because of the death of Jesus Christ on the cross. Christ's death provided a way for all people to come to God (to be reconciled). It removed sin that keeps us from having a right relationship with our Creator. This doesn't mean that everyone has been saved, but the way has been cleared for anyone who will trust Christ to be saved. We have peace with God and can be reconciled to Him by giving our lives to Christ, who died in our place.

OUR RECONCILIATION (vv 21-22).

No one is good enough to save himself. If we want to

live eternally with Christ, we must depend totally on God's grace. This is true whether we have committed murder or we have been honest, law abiding citizens. We have all sinned, and sinned repeatedly, and any sin is enough to require us to come to Jesus Christ for salvation and eternal life. Apart from Christ, there is no way for our sin to be forgiven. The way to be reconciled is to trust Jesus Christ to take our sin away. When God forgives our sins, our record is wiped clean. It's as though we had never sinned. God's solution is available to you no matter what you have done or what you have been like. God's forgiveness is for you.

OUR RESPONSIBILITY (v 23).

What should we do now, for God, now that we see His great love for us? We must be fervent in prayer, and "abound in holy duties" (Matthew Henry). We

must live no longer for ourselves, but for Christ. Verse 23 is an encouraging word from Paul to the Colossians to persevere in their faith. We must remain "established and steadfast" in the gospel, putting our confidence in Christ alone to forgive our sins, to make us right with God, and to give us the power to live the way He desires. We should die to sin, and live not for ourselves, but for Him.

Colossians is more than just a little letter written to an insignificant church, in an insignificant city. The book of Colossians carries a significant message that speaks to believers at all times and in all places. This letter gives a whole new perspective on Jesus Christ. It is a letter that heightens the impact of the person and power of Jesus Christ. He is our Lord. He is our life. He is our love. He is our everything.

Russell is member of First Church, McComb.

NAMES IN THE NEWS



West and McLain, pastor

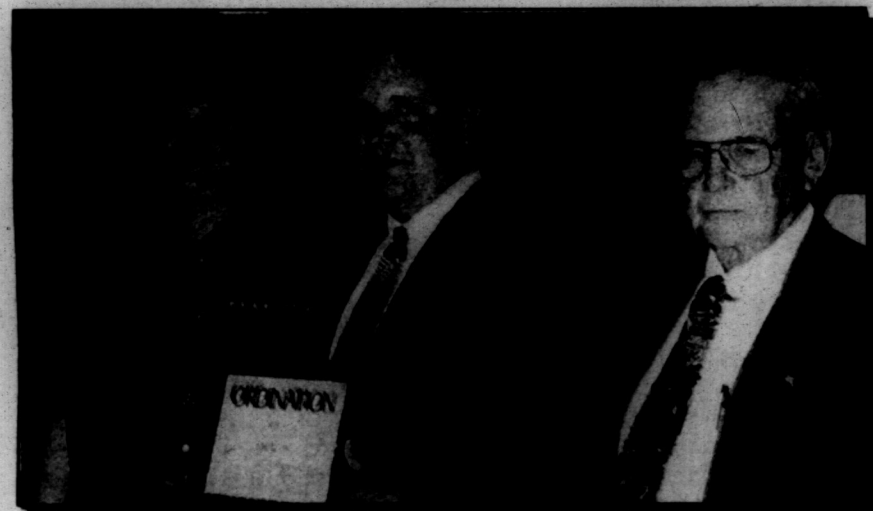
Rocky Creek Church, Lucedale, ordained L. D. West as deacon on September 28. Pictured (from left) are West and Grant McLain, pastor.

Calvary Church, Pascagoula, ordained Alan Hill as deacon September 14. Pictured (from left) are his wife, Shena Hill, Hill, and Darwin Thomas.



Cochran, Mitchell, Bridges, pastor, Prevot, and Peterson

Pine Grove Church, Picayune, recently presented Jonathan Mitchell with a five year perfect attendance certificate for Sunday School.



Shena & Alan Hill; and Darwin Thomas

Blaine Cochran, Katie Prevot, and Cole Peterson were presented one year perfect attendance certificates. Pictured (from left) are Cochran, Mitchell, Reggie Bridges, pastor, Prevot, and Peterson.

Edwards Church, Edwards, ordained John Charles Bethea as a deacon October 5. Pictured (from left) are John McCall, pastor, and Bethea.

First Church, Richton, ordained Joey Wyatt as deacon on September 28. Pictured (from left) are Buddy Keyes, pastor, and Wyatt.

First Church, Richton, licensed Mark Ford to the ministry on September 28. Pictured (from left) are Buddy Keyes, pastor, and Ford.

Vardamans Boys Sunday School Class reunion was held October 2 at Billy Smith's home, Magee. The class started in 1945 at First Church, Magee with Vardaman Runnels as the teacher. Runnels promoted with the boys until they graduated from high school. The men attending were Billy Allen, Scott Buffington, Mayo Mangum, Ray Roberts, Otto Walker, Harold Windborn, Joe McNair, Pete Russell, and Billy Smith.

Tom and Willa Moak are retired but they still enjoy working with the Lincoln

Choral. Tom directs the Choir and Willa plays the piano.

The children of Williamsville Church, Kosciusko, performed The Kingdom caper musical on August 24. Pictured are the performers.

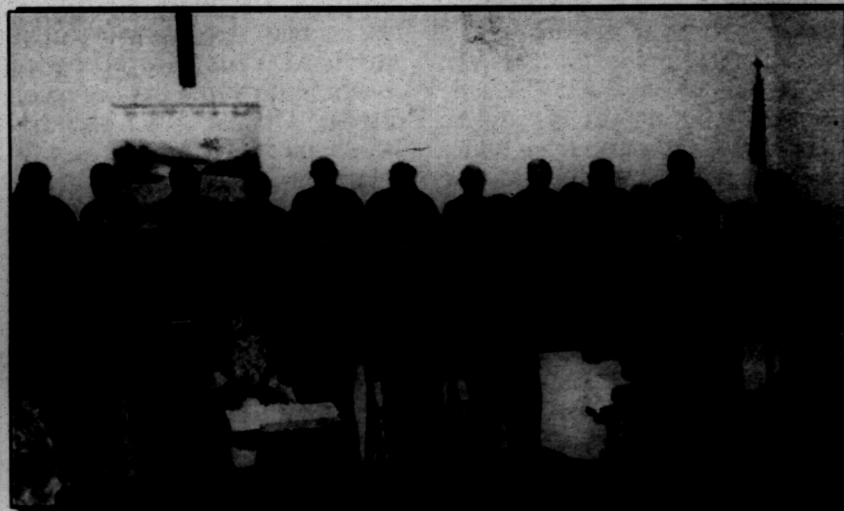
M.C. Johnson, Associational Missions Director for North Delta Association, recently presented a grand piano to Oliver Davis, pastor, and Good Hope Church, Tunica. The piano was donated by another church to the Association.



Keyes, pastor, and Ford



Keyes, pastor, and Wyatt



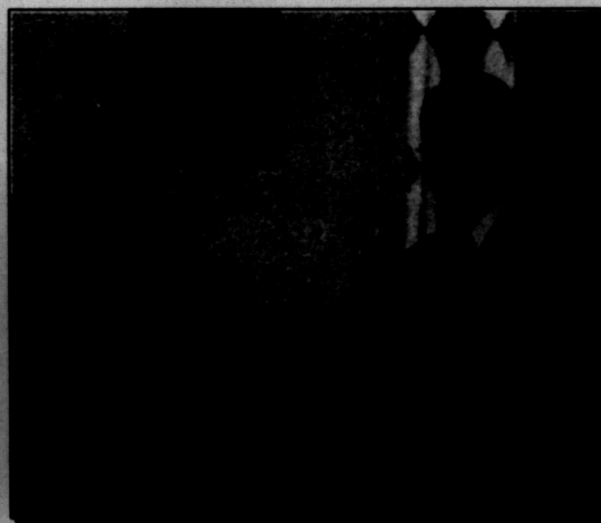
Tom & Willa Moak and the Lincoln Choral Choir



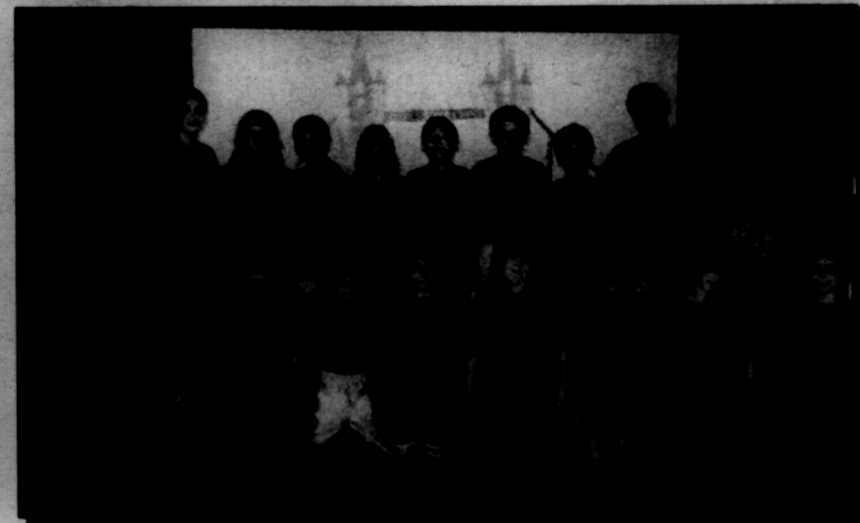
MISSISSIPPI
BAPTISTS



John McCall, pastor, and John Bethea



Johnson and Davis, pastor



Children of Williamsville Church, Kosciusko